NUMB. LII.

THE PLAIN DEALER.

——— De tot modo millibus unus :
——— De tot modo millibus una. OVID.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18. 1724.

THE following Letters sign'd MÆCENAS, were written, as their Dates shew, some Time since, by a Gentleman from *London*, to his Friend at *Cambridge*, and being full of a generous Spirit, and very deservedly communicated to us, by our Correspondent PHILANTHROPOS, we have inserted them, according to our Promise in our last.

London, December 20. 1723-4.

SIR,

WHat I here write to you, is Affection, true (because spontaneous) Affection to a Family who know not me, or that I am now writing, or intending to write to you, or any body concerning them.

I am just now seated at a Coffee-house, not far from the *Royal-Exchange*, where I am very much affected (as I often have been) with the genteel, humble Deportment of the Bar-keeper; A Deportment most agreeably adapted to her present Station,— Yet, at the same time, such as betokens a Genius superior to this Way of Livelihood. It is known to every body that sees this Gentlewoman (seeing her is knowing it) that she is a Gentlewoman: But that, moreover, she has *this* additional Merit, To have been the Consort, the loving, and beloved Consort, of the great and admirable *Favellus*; this perhaps is not so universally known.

Favellus was an eminent Preacher of the Town: Those that know his Character, can tell you, 'twas a Compound of all the good Characters belonging to a Christian, to a Divine, to a Gentleman. He had a most extensive Genius, which, with his own Education and Industry, made vast Acquirements in all sorts of Theological Literature. This will appear to a Man of any Sagacity, that makes use of That and his Sermons, when publish'd, which are now Printing by Subscription. The first of these Sermons, that was preached in my Hearing, gave me a most surprizing Mixture of Pleasure and Concern: *Pleasure*, in hearing, at once, a *Demosthenes*, and a *Euclid*, and a *Chrysostom*, and a *Bentley* (*All* met together) *All* speaking in this accomplish'd Divine; who was himself a most powerful, a most pathetick *Orator*, a most exact *Reasoner*, a most persuasive *Theologer*,— in one Word, *an universal consummate Scholar*.—— This was the *Pleasure*. A *Concern* too it gave me (a Concern inexpressible) arising from a certain Uneasiness I felt in my own Breast, from reflecting, that tho' I had been Years in *London*, this was but my *First* Pleasure of hearing this inimitable Man. After this, you may be sure I became his constant eager Attendant: And of all the Sermons I attended, Head and Heart, say this, —They were All, to a Degree that is incredible, *All* Edifying, All Entertaining; Entertaining, I mean in that Way wherein Theological Performances *may* and *ought* to entertain. 'Tis rare, *remarkably* rare, to meet with the Man that writes, or indeed is *capable* of writing, in that Close, that Mathematical, that Concatenating Way he excell'd in; or, that has the same Sagacity in *Pointing out* the Intricacies of an Argument, together with the same Acuteness, the same Clearness in *Removing* 'em; — putting Prejudice to the Blush; — reconciling Scripture to Scripture; — making Error *appear* to be Error, Truth to be Truth. You'd be sure not only to be pleas'd, but to *exult* in the Pleasure you took, if you had heard him frequently, as I did, advancing (and that so ingeniously) some Truths that were uncommon, and defending common ones in an uncommon Manner; making obscure Things plain; plain Things *surprizingly* plainer. —— To raise Objections so *pertinently*, to state 'em so *candidly*, to answer 'em so *unanswerably*, is a Talent, or rather *many* Talents, wherein but few Men, if few, cou'd come up to him.

I ask now, Shou'd it not be (Matter of *Wonder* to ALL Men, and) to Men of Merit, *Concern*, that this very Man, a Man of their own Number, a Minister of the Gospel too, an *eminent* Minister, an eminent Writer,— Great in Learning,— Great in Goodness,— Great in Renown,— Of a meek, humble, winning Disposition,— Of a sweet, sober, edifying Conversation,— Of a blameless, of an unspotted Character,— Withal too, a Man of strict *Orthodoxy* (and is not *This* alone a Thousand good Characters?)— I say, shou'd it not, even in Point of *Humanity* (much more so of *Charity*) affect *All* Men *of Merit*, or that *love* Merit, to observe how it pass'd unrewarded, slighted, discourag'd, tho' seen plainly, tho' admir'd universally, in this excellent Man?

Think— (and grieve when you think) how he Died! How Indigent! How *exceedingly* Indigent! — and this, after a Life wherein there was nothing of Excess,— except that of its being painful, *willingly* painful to *Himself*,— and that purposely that it might be useful to *Others*.

Behold him, *when Living*, living blamelessly in every Thing; — *Blamelessly* did I say? It had been just to have said, *Admirably* in every Thing: Admirably every where: *At Home* Studious, at Home Frugal, in all his Oeconomy: *Abroad* seldom— except at his Church: *At Church* attended with a full Congregation (perhaps the fullest in this Great City,

[Price Two Pence.]

City, wherein were Persons of almost all Denominations, all Ranks and Persuasions; all pleas'd, all *greedy* to hear this incomparable Man.— And yet,

Behold him, *when Dying*, not worth enough to defray the Charge of his Funeral! *Now*, it appears (thro' his own singular Modesty, it did not *till now*) What a poor Livelihood (—Wonder, and be astonish'd! and yet this was *All* his Livelihood (for Himself and Family) he got by the Ministry: Poor! so deplorably poor, that his distress'd Widow, and Two or Three young lovely Children, at least *some* of 'em, are likely, e'er long, (—O pity! pity!) even to —— I *cannot* speak it! —— What shall I say? ——My Heart bleeds when I think of it. He died, as I'm told, not worth Ten Shillings.

Within the Circle of your Acquaintance, and my own, there are, *some*, no doubt, that have Inclinations, but want *Abilities* to be Beneficent; some, that have Abilities, but want Inclinations: Some, that have *Both*, and wou'd imploy both, but know not *where* to imploy 'em. To these last sort of Persons, to all these able-well-inclining Persons, namely, To all that have *no Heirs* of their own to inherit after them, or have more Riches than enough for their Heirs, and for such like Reasons have generous Designs, I say, To *these* surely I need not say more.

Pity, even common Pity, mov'd me thus to throw in a Word or two (I hope, at least, 'twill have *some* favourable Consequence) in Favour of this unhappy Widow and Children (the Melancholy Remains of that Learned Good Man I have been speaking of); and this the rather, because, as you see, they are now reduc'd, for the Sake of a Subsistence, to the Business of a Coffee-house.

The Widow's Demeanor, in this new Way of Life, as I told you, is a *genteel* Humility, submissive, easy, chearful in this the Station allotted her, *Because* 'tis allotted her. She has this Character, in all its Beauty and Elegance, in all the Nicety and Good-breeding belonging to it. See the *Whole* of her Conduct. See in that, the *worst* of Adversities in its *best* Dress. Whoever attends to it (and whoever beholds, *cannot but* attend to it) has a very *instructive* Amusement. There is scarce an Action she does, that in this Way is not an excellent Document, being itself a Comment on that polite Humility I am speaking of. To see her, just now, bringing me the Dish of Coffee, I call'd for, with HER *peculiar* Way of doing it, is an admirable Criticism on those Words of St. *Paul*, *I know HOW to be Abased*. And to attend her, saying, *Sir, I thank you*, and her *Manner* of saying it (—with the Curt'sy annex'd) to a Gentleman that a while ago laid his Penny at the Bar, is perhaps a better Sermon than many a Divine cou'd have made on this Text of St. *Peter* [*Be Courteous*] So much for the Widow.

The Children (poor, fatherless, undone Children!) seem to carry an Hereditary Goodness in their very Aspects. It wou'd melt *any* Heart to behold them; any, especially, that remembers that worthy Father they descended from.

Sir, Sure you are affected with this Melancholy Narrative: 'Tis Truth. Inquire, and you'll find it *All* to be Truth, as related to you, by

Your most Affected

MÆCENAS.

London, May 21. 1724.

Dear SIR,

IN my last I griev'd, in this I rejoice; as you will, when I tell you, that the distress'd Widow of the late Reverend and Excellent *Favellus* is lately Married to a Good Man, and an ample Estate, ample enough to provide handsomly for her and her Children. Behold the Benevolence, behold the Goodness, the Superlative Goodness of *Amasius!* that has thought fit to bestow Himself, and his All! and this without Hurt to any Relation of his own. I esteem, I admire the Man, tho' I know him not. I'm all Joy and Transport, and impatient to tell it you. I can write nothing else; — therefore conclude in an Extasy.

Yours,

MÆCENAS.

———— *Sept.* 1. 1724.

SIR,

'TIS the Opinion of me, and of many, that the two Letters, I inclose, may pass with Advantage thro' your Hands to the Publick. If too long, abridge 'em as you think fit. I was at *Cambridge*, when I receiv'd both from *Mæcenas*, who, I must tell you, is a Gentleman of the *Temple*, that won't permit me to say more of him; nor need I to a Person, of *your* Taste and Discernment, that can read the Soul of a Man in his Letters.

Be just, Sir, to such a remarkable Piece of Generosity as this of *Amasius*, and convince the World, that it is not only an uncommon *Generosity*, but an uncommon *good Sense*; a good Sense, perhaps, which a great many *foolish* People have not a *Notion of*, and which a great many wise ones have *only* a Notion of.

The like Conduct to this of *Amasius*, was, t'other Day, that of *THEODOSIA*, a Lady of an amiable Character, and of a very considerable Family and Fortune. She has had a long and intimate Knowledge of *Honestus*, and of All his Good Qualities. She has often heard, often seen, what a kind Husband he made to his Wife, whom he has lately lost, and with her an Estate, that was all he had to subsist upon. He had met with many Adversities, many Trials before: But this was the greatest. He bore it manfully; hoping, trusting, resting, firmly and chearfully, in an Almighty Wisdom, Goodness, and Providence. With this Resolution, he made a friendly Visit to his Acquaintance in the Country; among the rest, to *Theodosia*, who receiv'd him kindly, and pity'd him. He there fell ill of a Fever, during which, she gave him a Thousand Proofs of her Tenderness! and, after he had recover'd, added this to the Number of 'em, *She Married him* ——Not without the Advice of her best Friends and Relations.——

This is the Character of *Honestus*; A great deal of *Merit*, but, withal, a great deal of *Poverty*, and *Four Children* along with it. For *this* she's reflected on. Cruel World! thus to treat the generous *Theodosia!* And thus to treat her, *because* she is generous! ——Cruelty itself! But incourage her, I beseech you, Sir, and let it be *your* Generosity to say all you can in behalf of *Theodosia's*.

Hereby, (if speedy) you'll oblige many, besides,

SIR,

Your Sincere Friend,

and Humble Servant,

PHILANTHROPOS.

We have received the Letter relating to *Detraction*, written by our Learned and Ingenious Correspondent *A. B.* and shall, very speedily, take such Notice of it, as is due to its Merit.

Printed for J. ROBERTS, in *Warwick-Lane*. Where *Letters* and *Advertisements* are taken in.
And where Complete Setts may be had.